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Message Text

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53
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W
---------- 052196
O 211315Z NOV 73
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4127

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1394

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D COPY (E.O. 11652 GDS VICE N/A)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR IC
SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: NAC CONSIDERATION

REF: (A) USNATO 5540: (B) STATE 228795: (C) STATE 228823

1. I AGREE COMPLETELY SUGGESTED GUIDANCES CONTAINED STATE REFTELS. DESPITE PESSIMISTIC AND NEGATIVE PUBLIC STATEMENTS BEING MADE BY ICELAND'S FONMINISTER WHICH HE IS DOING FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES WE ARE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS TOWARD A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE IDF ARRANGEMENT. AN ACTIVE NAC ROLE AT THIS PARTICULAR STAGE WOULD NOT (RPT NOT) BE PRODUCTIVE.

2. FYI: OVER WEEKEND HANS ANDERSEN CONVEYED TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN REYKJAVIK, WHO IS AN ACQUAINTANCE OF HIS FROM NATO DAYS, A FAIRLY ACCURATE RUNDOWN OF U.S. PROPOSALS. I LEARNED THIS FROM THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR WHO CALLED ON ME TO CLARIFY IN HIS OWN MIND WHETHER OUR "PROPOSALS REPRESENTED A FULL ONE-THIRD REDUCTION". THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR LEARNED FROM ANDERSEN WE HAD PROPOSED A REPLACEMENT OF "OVER 400" MILITARY WITH ICELANDERS WHO DO NOT REQUIRE ANY SPECIAL SECURITY CLEARANCES; ANOTHER "COUPLE HUNDRED MORE" WHO REQUIRE SOME SECURITY SCREENING; AND USG PREPARED TO DEPLOY SOME UNITS AMOUNTING TO "ABOUT 400" MORE MILITARY. HE SAID ANDERSEN TOLD HIM ALL THIS AMOUNTED TO "ABOUT A ONE-THIRD REDUCTION". HE SAID ANDERSEN ALSO TOLD HIM THAT USG MUST PROPOSE FURTHER CHANGES FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES BUT THAT WE CONFIDENTIAL

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WERE RELUCTANT TO GO FURTHER "AT LEAST AT THIS TIME".

3. I TOLD FRENCH AMBASSADOR THAT WE HAD MADE PROPOSALS ALONG THE LINES HE HEARD BUT COULD NOT CONFIRM THEY AMOUNTED TO ONE-THIRD

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REDUCTION. I TOLD HIM THAT IN OUR OPINION THE FONMIN PERSONALLY SEEMED TO ACCEPT CONCEPT OF A HARD CORE WHICH MUST BE MANNED BY MILITARY AND THAT WE WERE EXPLORING TOGETHER THE APPROPRIATE SIZE OF THAT HARD CORE. WHEN HE ASKED WHETHER I WAS OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC ON FINAL OUTCOME I REPLIED I WOULD RATHER NOT USE EITHER DESCRIPTION AT THIS TIME BUT COULD SAY WE WERE MAKING PROGRESS.

4. IT IS UNFORTUNATE ANDERSEN DIVULGED THIS TO FRENCH AMBASSADOR BECAUSE IN MY OPINION HE IS NOT THE MOST DISCREET OR DISCERNING MAN I HAVE EVER MET.

5. BECAUSE OF THE ABOVE AND BECAUSE OF OUR VERY CLOSE AND SPECIAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP ON IDF RETENTION ISSUE WITH NORWEGIAN AND DANISH AMBASSADORS IN REYKJAVIK, I SUBSEQUENTLY BRIEFED THESE TWO AMBASSADORS ON THE SESSIONS ALONG THE LINES OF INFORMATION NOW KNOWN BY FRENCH AMBASSADOR. I TOLD THEM OF AMBASSADOR PORTER'S MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER WHICH ENCOURAGED US AND ABOUT ATTITUDE OF FONMIN WHICH I DESCRIBED AS CAUTIOUS BUT WHO NEVERTHELESS SHOWED COOPERATIVE SPIRIT. NORWEGIAN AMBASSADOR WAS CONCERNED WE NOT REDUCE MILITARY TO EXTENT THAT WE JEOPARDIZE SECURITY OF IDF FACILITIES. I ASSURED HIM USG PROPOSALS TAKE THIS POINT WELL INTO ACCOUNT. I SUGGESTED SITUATION STILL CALLED FOR OUR JOINT BUT QUIET EFFORTS ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FRONT TO CREATE A FAVORABLE PUBLIC ATMOSPHERE FOR THE FORTHCOMING DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT.

6. AS SOON AS THE FONMIN BRIEFS HIS PARTY, THE CABINET AND THE PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WE CAN EXPECT LEAKS. GUIDANCE SUGGESTED STATE REFTELS STILL THE BEST TO FOLLOW EVEN IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE.

7. DISTRIBUTION OF THIS TEL TO OTHER POSTS BEING LEFT TO DISCRETION OF DEPT.
IRVING

CONFIDENTIAL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEGOTIATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: martinjw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973REYKJA01394
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750020-1927
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731166/abqcegur.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: (A) USNATO 5540: (B) STATE 228795: (C) STATE 228823
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Sep-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: NAC CONSIDERATION
TAGS: MARR, US, IC, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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